

## Kathleen Antinoro, MA CCC-SLP – Employee Spotlight – November 2020

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Rochester Hearing and Speech Center has been lucky to have Katie Antinoro on our team for the past sixteen years providing speech therapy and evaluations to preschool age children. Through her expertise, warmth and compassion, Katie, our Manager of Committee on Preschool Special Education Evaluations, positively impacts the lives of young children and their families every day. She leads our preschool evaluation team, conducts evaluations, and works closely with the school districts and families to ensure the children's needs are met. Katie also provides speech therapy to children in our preschool and early intervention programs.

Katie Antinoro and the RHSC evaluation team understand that having your child evaluated can often be the first step in improving the life of a child. She and her team help families identify the unique strengths, aptitudes and challenges of each child and improve their quality of life.

“The professionals on our evaluation team love evaluating young children! We all enjoy working with children and their families to determine each child's strengths and needs and how RHSC can best support them,” said Katie. The team presents tasks in a play-based manner and tries to help the child have fun as information is gathered. Parents stay with the child for the duration of the evaluation. Children often want to stay and play at the end!

In addition to structured testing activities, the evaluators utilize observations of the child in play and parent feedback, as these informal assessment measures are also an important part of overall findings. A diagnosis and effective therapy can have a huge impact on children and their families. RHSC's team, led by Katie Antinoro, knows this. Results are shared and discussed with the family before they leave, and our team answers any questions the family may have. Later, detailed written reports are provided to families and Katie reaches out to every family after written reports are sent to answer any additional questions.

Beginning in late March, when kids were not able to be evaluated in-person due to COVID-19, and families were faced with the challenge of finding an evaluator during the shut-down, the team immediately got to work on setting up processes for completing evaluations remotely through TeleTherapy. Although TeleTherapy was new to our team, after completing trainings and research on best practices, evaluations were able to be completed in a manner both safe and thorough.

As RHSC has reopened for face to face appointments, we now offer families the option of in-person or remote evaluations. For our in-center evaluations, we follow strict procedures for safety precautions including the use of masks, face shields, plastic coverings of evaluation materials, cleaning of all materials and surfaces following evaluations and distancing. We now have the flexibility to provide families an evaluation in the manner that suits them best.

Katie is proud to work at Rochester Hearing and Speech Center. She says, **“Our staff is very knowledgeable, caring, and enthusiastic, and invested in helping the clients and families that we serve. I can ask any colleague a question and be helped consistently.”**